

BEIJING REVIEW

北京周報

A CHINESE WEEKLY
OF
NEWS AND VIEWS

- Direct Election at the County Level
- Moscow's "Dumb-Bell" Strategy
- Year of the Monkey Begins



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WEEK

First Spring Festival of the 80s and Pioneers of Tomorrow

The coming of the Spring Festival marked the beginning of the Year of the Monkey, according to the old Chinese lunisolar calendar. To mark the occasion, which was celebrated all over the country with parties, family reunions and social get-togethers and renewed pledges to step up the modernization drive (Page 3), our artists have prepared for *Beijing Review* readers a Chinese scissor-cut with the Monkey King as its central figure (see cover picture). This popular folklore hero is much admired by the Chinese people for his fearlessness and ingenuity, boldly challenging heaven and for ever upsetting outdated conventions. The artists' message is: Forward! China needs millions of "Monkey Kings," men and women with the courage to break new ground and blaze new trails.

N.P.C. Standing Committee Session

The Standing Committee of the 5th National People's Congress met early this month. It discussed the nation's tasks in the 80s and adopted a number of decisions. (Page 4)

Direct Election at County Level

Our Correspondent takes you to Tongxiang County in coastal Zhejiang Province where direct elections of deputies to the local people's congress were held recently by secret ballot. The reports he has sent back deal in brief with these questions: What is the basic political system in China? How does the system of people's congresses function? Why should there be standing committees of local people's congresses at the county level and above? Why are revolutionary committees replaced by people's governments? How are the candidates nominated? And how are the elections carried out? (Page 11)

Soviet "Dumb-Bell" Strategy

Moscow's thrust into Afghanistan is a significant move in its pursuit of the "dumb-bell" strategy of outflanking Western Europe, controlling the vital oil supply lane to the West and linking its western and eastern theatres for expansion. Unless the new tsars' southward drive is checked in time, it will bring disastrous consequences to the world. (Page 8)

Facets of Chinese Life

What the young people want to do in the 80s and winter camping in Harbin (Page 20), Professor Hua Luogeng of international renown (Page 21) and observation of the total eclipse of the sun. (Page 22)



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Celebrating the Spring Festival

Brimming with hope and confidence in accomplishing the four modernizations, the nation celebrated with joy the first Spring Festival (February 16-18) of the 1980s.

With the speedy restoration and development of the national economy in the past three years, the supply of goods for this year's Spring Festival was the richest ever since the start of the Cultural Revolution in 1966. In Beijing, the supply of pork, chickens, cigarettes and liquor increased by 20 per cent over last year. Firecrackers, festive lanterns, toys and other goods for the occasion were plentiful. In Shanghai the amount of consumer goods available rose by 14 per cent. Maotai and other famous liquors and wines supplied to the market increased by 50 per cent compared with last year. In the countryside, there was an increase in the number of bicycles, sewing-machines, clocks and wrist-watches for the peasants. Since young peasants like to get married during the Spring Festival, furniture, bed-sheets, blankets, bright-coloured silk quilt covers and other daily necessities were shipped in good time to the rural markets. All this made for a happy Spring Festival, the biggest traditional Chinese holiday.

Minority peoples also bought much richer commodities for the festival than in the past years. Over 45,000 tons of non-staple food were shipped from Urumqi, capital of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, to various parts of the region. These included more than 1,000 kinds of sausages, tinned food,

cakes and sweets. In addition, over 200 kinds of commodities specially needed by the minority peoples were on sale. Last year, retail sales in the five autonomous regions — Tibet, Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, Guangxi and Ningxia — amounted to 11,400 million yuan, an increase of 7.5 per cent over 1978.

During the three-day holiday, the Chinese people gathered together for family reunion dinners and enjoyed a rich variety of artistic performances. Ten colour feature films were shown during the festival throughout the country. In Beijing over 100 modern plays, operas and local operas were staged.

Happy Get-Togethers. Numerous get-togethers and forums were held in the Great Hall of the People, the C.P.P.C.C. auditorium and other places participated by people from various circles, including C.P.P.C.C. members, democratic party members, representatives of minority peoples, returned overseas Chinese, religious personages, scientists and writers. A gala get-together with 30,000 people taking part took place on February 15 at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. It was attended by Comrades Hua Guofeng, Deng Xiaoping, Li Xian-nian and other Party and state leaders, representatives of government functionaries, officers and men of the P.L.A., workers, peasants and intellectuals — a demonstration of unity and determination to work for the four modernizations.



Get-together in the Great Hall of the People.

On February 14, Comrade Hua Guofeng had a discussion with scientists on how to speed up China's socialist modernizations. After listening to their opinions, he said that the modernization of agriculture, industry and national defence could not be separated from the modernization of science and technology. He underscored the need to raise the scientific and cultural level of the whole nation and the importance of popularization. Leading cadres at all levels, he said, should conscientiously study scientific and cultural knowledge. He expressed the hope that scientists would organize classes for comrades working in the central organs.

Comrade Hua Guofeng also said that to accomplish the four modernizations, it is very im-

Letter to Taiwan Compatriots

The National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference sent a letter of Spring Festival greetings to compatriots in Taiwan on February 15.

The letter said: The Taiwan compatriots have a glorious patriotic tradition of love for the motherland. Opposing "two Chinas" and the "independence of Taiwan," opposing schism and fighting for the reunification of the motherland are the common desires of the people of various nationalities in the country, including compatriots in Taiwan.

The letter condemned the Taiwan authorities' using the "Gaoxiong incident" as the pretext to make mass arrests of patriotic compatriots and non-Kuomintang personages in December last year. It expressed cordial sympathy and solicitude for the arrested innocent compatriots and their families.

"No relation is closer than that of flesh and blood, no sorrow deeper than that of separation," the letter continued. "The Taiwan Straits used to be a passage of water for Chinese people travelling between Taiwan and the mainland, but now it has become a barrier separating us. This state of affairs must not continue."

The letter expressed the hope that people of all walks of life in Taiwan would make continued efforts to urge the Kuomintang authorities to accept the proposals of the Communist Party of China for the peaceful settlement of the Taiwan problem, first of all to re-establish postal links, trade relations, and air and shipping services between Taiwan and the mainland. It also expressed the hope that the Taiwan authorities would respect the democratic rights and patriotic feelings of our compatriots in Taiwan and take the common patriotic road towards the reunification of the motherland.

portant to exchange advanced scientific and technological knowledge with foreign countries and that it won't do to close our door to such exchanges. But, he stressed, our firm stand is to maintain independence, keep the initiative in our own

hands and rely on our own efforts. He encouraged veteran scientists to pass on their knowledge to the younger generation and work together with the people of the whole nation in building a modern, powerful socialist country.



Peasants celebrating the Spring Festival.

POLITICAL

N.P.C. Standing Committee Session

The 13th Session of the Standing Committee of the 5th National People's Congress closed in Beijing on February 12. The eight-day session discussed the political and economic situation and adopted a number of decisions.

- It discussed Deng Xiaoping's report on the current situation and tasks. After exchanging views on the heavy tasks in the 80s, the N.P.C. Standing Committee members held that in this decade it is necessary to win decisive victory in the four modernizations, to strive for the return of Taiwan to the embrace of the motherland, and to oppose hegemonism in international affairs. Of these three, the central task is to do a good job in economic construction at home, that is, modernizing the country.

The experience gained since the founding of New China shows that when there is turbulence, production falls and the people suffer, but when there is stability, production develops and the people are happy. At present, a political situation of stability and unity has appeared in the country as a whole, but there are still some instable factors in various localities which must be dealt with in all seriousness.

- It adopted a decision on direct elections at the county level. In the latter half of last year, 66 counties in China carried out direct elections on a trial basis (see p. 11). The session decided that, in the first

half of this year, the scope of similar direct elections will be extended in various parts of the country and that, in the latter half of the year, direct elections at the county level will be carried out in separate groups and stages across the nation. It is expected that such elections will be basically completed by the next winter-spring period. The extension of direct elections to the county level is of great significance, for it is the basis for electing deputies to the people's congresses at the provincial level and to the National People's Congress and is an important link in the current establishment of political power.

- It adopted a decision on the enforcement of the Law of Criminal Procedure. The session decided that pending criminal cases filed during 1979 will still be handled in accordance with the policies, laws and regulations and juridical procedures before the enforcement of the Law of Criminal Procedure, while criminal cases filed since January 1, 1980, shall be handled in accordance with the provisions of that law which came into force on January 1 this year. If there are too many criminal cases and not enough personnel to handle them according to the procedures stipulated in the Procedural Law, the standing committees of the people's congresses of the provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities may grant an extension in time in the handling of these cases.

- The session heard a report on the situation in industry and transportation in 1979 and their tasks in 1980. Last year China's total industrial output

value increased by more than 8 per cent over that of 1978, with light industry showing a 9 per cent increase which surpassed heavy industry's increase of 7.4 per cent.

- It heard a report on consolidating public security in the cities and towns and suggestions on future work in this field. Since last November there has been an improvement in social order and security. At present, work in this respect must be continued. Resolute measures must be taken to deal blows at all kinds of criminals, especially those who gravely endanger public security, so as to consolidate stability and social order and ensure the smooth progress of the four modernizations.

- It adopted a resolution to establish a machine-building industry commission under the State Council. This is to strengthen unified leadership over the machine-building industry.

- The session approved a number of appointments and changes in appointments which include the appointment of Vice-Premier Bo Yibo concurrently as Minister in Charge of the Machine-Building Industry Commission and the appointment of Vice-Premier Ji Pengfei concurrently as Secretary-General of the State Council.

- The session approved the Regulations of the People's Republic of China for Awarding Academic Degrees which is to come into force in January 1981.

- The session examined a draft of the Law of Citizenship of the People's Republic of China and also heard a report on the implementation of the Law on Joint Ventures Involv-

ing Chinese and Foreign Investments since its promulgation.

Upholding the Tradition of Hard Work and Plain Living

Renmin Ribao on January 15 published a letter from seven cashiers working in a branch office of the Chinese People's Construction Bank specially set up for the North China Oilfield in Hebei Province. The letter criticized the oilfield for violating state financial regulations in building ten large recreational centres and four guest houses at a high cost last year. The letter said that, according to the 1978 government regulations, industrial and mining enterprises are allowed to build ordinary offices and simple guest houses only, and no unit is allowed to build high-standard houses without the authorization of the State Council.

The leadership of the North China Oilfield accepted this open criticism. A responsible comrade of the oilfield's Party committee said in a self-criticism at a meeting that they had become self-complacent over the development of crude oil production in the last few years and so had built recreational centres and other houses in violation of the Daqing spirit of arduous struggle. He told the meeting that the Party committee had decided to stop the construction of all the unfinished projects with the exception of four which had been completed.

The construction of the Daqing Oilfield was started in 1960 when China was faced with serious economic difficulties. The leader of a drilling team, Wang Jinxi who was known as

the "iron man," said: "To build the oilfield, we'll have to bear great hardships. But if we don't build it, our country will encounter greater hardships. What we should do is: Go ahead with the work when there are the conditions for it. In the absence of these conditions, create them and go ahead all the same."

It was in this spirit that the cadres and workers opened up the oilfield, defying the cold weather and harsh conditions. They moved the drilling rigs to the construction site by sheer muscle, and broke ice to get water for the rigs to operate smoothly. After overcoming enormous difficulties, they succeeded in extracting oil in a short time.

On January 17 *Renmin Ribao* published the State Council's decision to cancel plans of departments directly under the State Council and the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party to build a large number of offices and guest houses. The national paper pointed out in its editor's notes that this decision was a demonstration of the fine tradition of hard struggle and plain living and of cadres sharing good and bad times with the masses, a policy which the Party had consistently advocated.

In the four modernizations drive, said *Renmin Ribao*, cadres should not go after modern amenities or up-to-date working conditions, still less should they put the stress on building modern offices. Readjustment of the national economy is being made at present. The state's limited financial and material resources should be used for capital construction in agriculture and the light industry as well as for the coal and power industries and the transport service — all weak

links in the national economy. In addition, money should be used in building residential quarters for the workers and staff members, schools, hospitals and other public facilities.

ECONOMIC

Leading Cadres Receive Training in Management

A two- to five-year programme is being introduced in China to train leading personnel in industrial and agricultural work for the modernization drive. The emphasis is on business management, a weak link in the nation's economic work.

Last year, 460,000 cadres from industrial departments all over the country finished their courses in business management and technology. Among them, 160,000 are leading cadres.

- Oil specialists from 14 oil-fields took part in on-the-spot training in the Daqing Oilfield, the national pace-setter in production and management.

- Over 300 forestry bureau chiefs from various parts of the country attended courses sponsored by the Ministry of Forestry.

- The Anshan Iron and Steel Company offered courses for its 20,000 leading personnel in mining, iron-smelting and steel-rolling as well as computer technology.

Courses are also being given in various localities to leading cadres working in the agricultural departments. In Hunan, for instance, over 1,000 cadres from the provincial level down to the county agricultural bureaus have attended courses in farm economics and machinery, agronomy and stock-breeding. These courses are generally from two weeks to four months, with teachers from the univer-

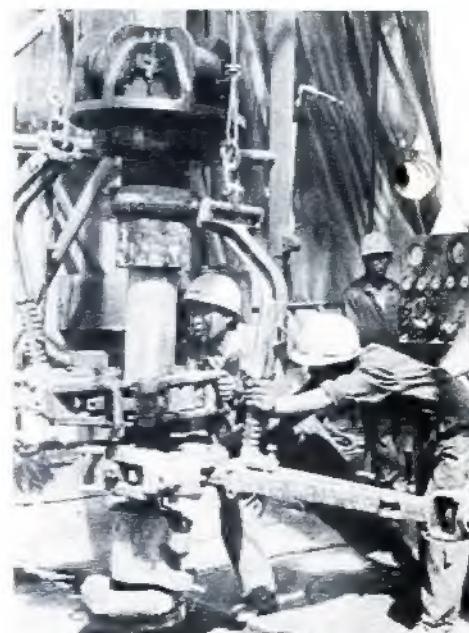
sities and colleges in charge.

Many secretaries of Party committees, leading administrative cadres and bureau chiefs from the provincial and autonomous regional level down are studying modern science and technology. They have devoted a greater part of their life to the cause of China's liberation and post-liberation construction and have accumulated rich experiences.

Now, with the modernization programme high on the agenda, they are required to acquire the technical know-how in addition to their devotion to the socialist cause. They will study advanced foreign experiences in management so as to do a better job in their own fields.

Oil Potential in Tarim

Hundreds of tons of crude oil and nearly a million cubic metres of natural gas gush daily from each of the three wells already drilled in the Tarim Basin in southern Xinjiang.



A drilling team prospecting in Tarim.

Such high-yield wells with high underground pressure and stable output are rare in China, according to petroleum experts.

China's biggest sedimentary rock basin, Tarim covers an area of 560,000 square kilometres. Chinese geologists and oil workers have for years carried out large-scale prospecting and surveys in this almost inaccessible desert area in spite of its inclement climate.

Three New Gas Fields

Three new fields with rich deposits of natural gas were located last year in Jiangbei and Linshui Counties in eastern Sichuan Province. They are all in carboniferous strata more than 4,000 metres underground.

Since the distribution of carboniferous strata is very wide in the eastern parts of Sichuan, there are bright prospects for the future location and exploitation of natural gas in this area.

At the end of last year, dozens of specialists in geology, geophysics and petroleum met in Beijing to discuss the oil potential of Tarim. They were of the opinion that the area holds great promise and that overall prospecting work should be carried out without delay.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Co-operation With European Enterprises

"In the next few years, apart from the construction of a small number of large projects, China will devote its main efforts to the technical trans-

formation of existing enterprises. Foreign enterprises, particularly the small and medium-sized ones in Western Europe, are welcome to enter into various forms of economic and technological co-operation with Chinese enterprises, including joint enterprises, co-ordination in production, compensatory trade, processing for foreign customers who supply the designs and raw materials, and training of technical and managing personnel."

This was said at a press conference held on February 6 in Geneva by Yang Bo who was the head of the Chinese delegation to the Davos Symposium of the European Management Forum and also Vice-Minister of China's State Planning Commission.

He said that China's absorption and use of foreign funds are mainly for the exploitation of coal, oil and non-ferrous metals, and for the construction of power stations and transport and communications facilities. Arrangements will also be made for the import of advanced technology and key equipment for agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, light and textile industries and machine-building and chemical industries.

Yang Bo assured foreign investors that China will fully protect their legitimate rights and interests. China, he said, promulgated last year the law on joint ventures using Chinese and foreign investment, and specific decrees and regulations are under study and will be drawn up to implement the law. "Preferential treatment will have good prospects of gain, and the employment of

foreign workers and staff members, including senior workers and staff members with operational and managerial experience, will be decided on through consultation between the parties to the joint ventures."

He explained that China's efforts to increase production aim mainly at meeting domestic needs. China will develop foreign trade as well, but European businessmen do not have to worry about competition from the Chinese.

Detained Vietnamese Military Personnel Released

On February 14 China released 24 detained Vietnamese military personnel, including chief petty officer Pham Minh Hung who was the skipper of a boat, so that they could reunite with their families during the Spring Festival.

These Vietnamese personnel were taken on April 10, 1979, by the Chinese navy at a point about 500 to 700 metres from the coasts of the Xisha Islands while they were carrying out reconnaissance and provocations in three boats. After their detainment they confessed that they belonged to the Fifth Military District Command of the Vietnamese Armed Forces. They admitted that they had "intruded into Chinese territorial waters" and "committed a crime against the Chinese people."

During their detainment, they were given lenient treatment.

Moscow's "Dumb-Bell" Strategy

THE military occupation of Afghanistan is a new move taken by the Kremlin to outflank Western Europe and also a new thrust in its "dumb-bell strategy"—a graphic description of Soviet strategy—in the Orient. The "dumb-bell" consists of the Pacific at one end and the Indian Ocean at the other, with the Strait of Malacca as the bar joining the two regions.

This latest move makes it clear that the Kremlin has not changed its strategic tilt towards Western Europe but is pressing forward relentlessly. However, it dramatizes a recent development—the linking up of the Kremlin's outflanking movement against Western Europe with its drive into the heart of Asia and the Pacific.

Outflanking Western Europe

Despite its geographical distance from Europe, a Soviet-controlled Afghanistan greatly increases the pressure on the United States and Western Europe. It serves as a springboard for a southward leap to-

wards the Indian Ocean.

A Soviet Afghanistan plus a warm-water port on the Indian Ocean would lead to a grip on the Gulf oil supply lane and a crowning military move to outflank Western Europe.

The Soviet strategic encirclement of Western Europe has for a period of time been limited to massive military buildup in Eastern Europe as well as advances made in the Middle East and North Africa as a flank of Europe.

In the case of the Middle East, within the crescent from the entrance to the Red Sea to the Gulf, the Soviet Union has gained footholds which support each other around the mouth of the Red Sea through the conclusion of the Soviet-South Yemen, Soviet-Ethiopian and South Yemen-Ethiopian treaties. It has been steadily increasing its military presence and pressure in the area so that the political situation in oil-rich countries on the Arabian Peninsula will develop in its favour. It exploits the differences be-

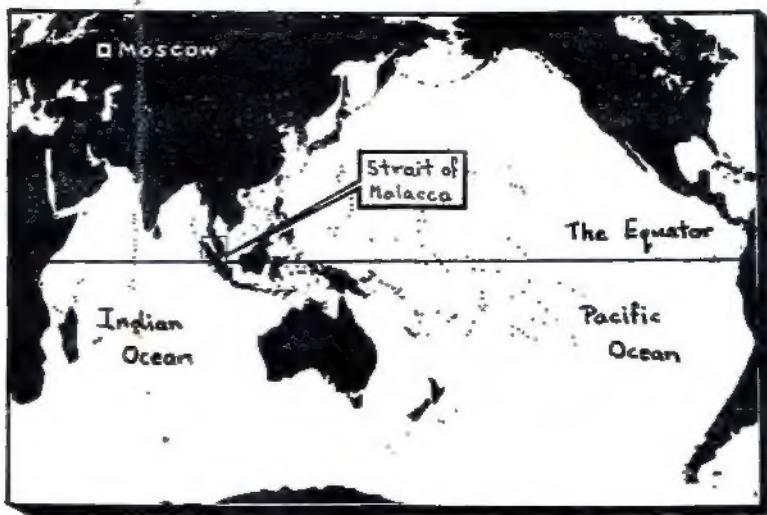
tween the Arab countries over how to deal with Israeli aggression, and over the Egyptian-Israeli talks, in particular, to enhance its influence in some Arab states. It has meddled with ethnic conflicts in Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan, and inflamed the issues of Kurds, Azerbaijanis, Baluchis and Pashtoons to interfere in the domestic affairs of its southern neighbours. It has manoeuvred to foster the pro-Soviet Communist Parties there in such a way that they can seize power by exploiting upheavals to increase their force and edge U.S. influence out of the region.

At the same time, the Kremlin has increased its naval presence in the Indian Ocean and massed troops on the southern border.

The invasion of Afghanistan is clearly a central breakthrough in the chain of Soviet designs in this region, placing both Pakistan and Iran among the next potential victims.

With the Soviet occupation forces in Afghanistan advancing to areas bordering on Pakistan and Iran, a Soviet-dominated Baluchistan carved out from the three countries is quite conceivable as Moscow's next step towards a warm-water port on the shores of the Indian Ocean.

Any further Soviet advance in this direction will spell catastrophe for the United States and Western Europe. Once Moscow gains a naval base on the Indian Ocean, it would bring under its control the world's three major ocean highways: the passage from the Gulf to the Suez Canal, the Strait of Malacca and the route around the Cape of Good Hope—three arteries through which oil flows



to the United States, Western Europe, Japan, Canada and Australia. Such control is surely unacceptable to any country which depends on Middle East oil. So no one in Western Europe believes that the Afghan venture signifies a Soviet strategic tilt towards the East and consequently an easing of the pressure on Europe.

Dispositions in the East

It is far from adequate today just to repeat that the emphasis of Soviet strategy lies in Europe. Given the stalemated confrontation in Europe, the Kremlin, emboldened by the enervated reactions of the West to its advances, has turned away to strengthen its strategic dispositions in the East. It has raised the status and strength of its Pacific fleet based in Vladivostok (Haishenwei) to that of its European fleets. It has increased its naval movements through the Sea of Japan southward to menace Japan's security and challenge the U.S. naval presence in the Western Pacific. It spends well over two million U.S. dollars a day to prod Viet Nam to overrun Kampuchea, dominate Laos and threaten ASEAN states.

Having Cam Ranh and Da Nang of Viet Nam as its strategic bases in Southeast Asia, it has taken a step further to grab Kampuchea's port of Kompong Som. It is trying to poison the relations between countries on the Indian subcontinent to facilitate its penetration into South Asia.

The Strait of Malacca joining the Pacific and Indian Oceans is of strategic importance. If the strait is blocked, it would bar the way between the U.S. naval forces in the two oceans and cut off the route for oil shipments which are vital to Japan and other countries.

This is the strategic thinking behind the unstinted Soviet support to Viet Nam in its advance towards Southeast Asia and ultimately the Strait of Malacca. And the push into Afghanistan is another key move in its pursuit of the "dumb-bell" strategy.

Hegemonist Designs Can Be Defeated

The grave implications of the invasion lies in its overall significance. It integrates the Soviet strategy in the West with that in the East. It gives teeth to the Soviet threat to Western Europe, where the emphasis of its strategy still lies, while bolstering immeasurably the Soviet venture in the Asian-Pacific region. It is a global strategic breakthrough in Soviet preparations

for war. This southward drive, if not brought to a halt, will have disastrous consequences for the people of the world.

As the Afghan invasion constitutes a grave challenge to world peace, it naturally serves to spur the people and all peace-loving countries to join hands and fight it. The vehement worldwide reaction against it in the past two months is actually a manifestation of this unity.

All who oppose hegemonism should enhance this worldwide unity so as to take solid and effective actions against Soviet expansionism and upset the Kremlin's strategic dispositions — the only way to defeat Soviet hegemonist designs.

— Xinhua Commentator

Answer to Moscow's "Detente" Drive

THE Afghan events have served best to explode the Kremlin's "detente" fraud, but Moscow is again publicizing "detente" as a smokescreen to cover up its aggression and expansion. Using every available means and opportunity, Moscow is trying to make people believe that it is resolved to promote "detente" on the basis of the "achievements" in the 70s and wants the Western countries not to "go against detente" but to "return to the road of detente."

As Predicted. It is an old trick of the new tsars to raise a hue and cry about "detente" right after committing aggression and expansion. When the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, the world public fully expected Moscow to resort to its old tactic in an attempt to gain a breathing spell, consolidate the new

positions gained by its aggression, allay worldwide condemnation and make preparations for further expansion and adventures. It was no surprise, therefore, to see Moscow drape a cloak of "detente" over its battledress and come on stage to put on its act.

The current Soviet "detente" drive is marked by emphasis on driving a wedge between the West European countries and the United States and splitting the West's united front against Soviet aggression. Moscow is warning the West European countries not to fall into the U.S. trap, saying that Europe and Washington cannot be fellow-travellers. The Soviet paper *Izvestia* even told the West European countries that "detente" in Europe would be jeopardized if they joined the United States in opposing the

Soviet policy of expansion, a clear signal that tension would mount in Europe.

Since the Soviet Union enjoys military superiority in Europe, it has dared to blatantly put pressure on Western Europe, convinced as it is that there are always some West Europeans with illusions about "detente" who cherish the hope that tension in other parts of the world will not disturb the situation of "detente" in Europe.

A Dose of Sobriety. If there were many people in Western Europe with various kinds of illusions about the Soviet Union in the 70s, the Afghan events have sobered them. The Soviet threat to the Persian Gulf region has made them realize that if Western Europe makes no response to Soviet aggression and expansion, sooner or later Western Europe will find its lifeline cut by Moscow, and the West European countries will become sitting ducks for the Soviet Union. The Afghan events have therefore convinced more and more far-sighted people in Western Europe that "detente is inseparable" and that it is impermissible to listen to Soviet talk about "detente" in Europe while its armies carry on expansion elsewhere, particularly in the flanks of Western Europe. Recently, many West European countries have joined in a boycott against the Soviet Union. France and West Germany at their summit conference condemned the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan and demanded withdrawal of Soviet troops from that country. All this constitutes a clear reply to the Soviet "peace offensive" and also a blow to Moscow's efforts to sow dissension.

Futile Efforts. The general trend of development indicates that Soviet attempts to sow dissension between the United States and Western Europe are bound to fail. Of course, as circumstances differ for the West European countries and the United States, their views of the general situation and their policies are not all identical. It is, therefore, quite normal that Western Europe and the United States should hold different views and adopt different policies. But in dealing with the menace of the Soviet Union, their basic interests are the same. The West European move towards unity and integration has still a long way to go. West European defence cannot yet do without U.S. support and help and the United States cannot do without Western Europe's help and support in standing up to the Soviet Union's forceful offensive. Because of the United

States' successive concessions before the Soviet drive in the 70s, Western Europe began to doubt the ability of the United States to come to its aid in the event of a Soviet attack, and the ties of interdependence between Western Europe and the United States have weakened accordingly. However, this does not mean that Western Europe is willing to forsake the United States and accept Soviet control. Although some West European countries have been intrigued with the Soviet "detente" formula, it is obvious that they are not ready to sacrifice their independence and very existence for it.

The events in Afghanistan have made Western Europe feel more keenly the threat posed by the Soviet strategy of outflanking it. The United States has also changed its former policy of making one concession after another to the Soviet Union.

Therefore, in spite of their differences on certain particular questions, there exists an extensive and solid basis for unity between the United States and Western Europe against Soviet aggression and expansion, a unity most feared by the Soviet Union. If the West European countries strengthen unity against Soviet hegemonism among themselves and with the United States by seeking common ground while reserving differences, it would be the best answer to the new round of the Soviet "detente" drive.



A step farther.
Cartoon by Wang Yu

— "Renmin Ribao"
Commentator

Election of Deputies to a County People's Congress

by Our Correspondent Tian Sansong

For the first time in New China's history, deputies to the county people's congress are being elected directly by the voters. In the second half of last year, such elections were tried out in 66 administrative units at the county level. Similar elections will be held in some 2,000 other units at the county level and the whole work will, in the main, be completed in the next winter-spring period.

The following articles are about the direct election of deputies to the Tongxiang county people's congress in coastal Zhejiang Province.

County People's Congress

ON the first day of the 1980s, the wooden board of the Tongxiang county revolutionary committee in front of its office building was replaced by two shining new ones. They carried the names of the Standing Committee of the Tongxiang County People's Congress and the Tongxiang County People's Government.

This was one of the results of the First Session of the Seventh People's Congress of Tongxiang County which was held at the end of last year.

An Organ of State Power

The 491 deputies to the congress (three others were absent) elected the standing committee of the county people's congress which is composed of a chairman, five vice-chairmen and 13 members. The county head and five deputy county

heads were also elected. The standing committee of a county people's congress, something unheard of before in China, was born. And so was a new county people's government.

The 56-year-old Zhu Shiyuan was elected chairman of the standing committee. A veteran cadre tempered in the long years of revolution, Zhu was once a county head and chairman of a county revolutionary committee. He was elected unanimously by the deputies.

Ma Chuanfeng, 54, was elected the county head by 490 votes. Strong and robust, he was once the secretary of the Party committee of a people's commune, deputy county head and vice-chairman of a county revolutionary committee. He made a work report to the session.

The meeting was held in a lively atmosphere. The deputies



The First Session of the Seventh People's Congress of Tongxiang County.

SPECIAL FEATURE COUNTY ELECTION

hailed the reconvening of the county people's congress which had stopped functioning for 13 years. They spoke of the economic growth in the last three years, especially that of the rural economy, and expressed their views on the achievements in the restoration of socialist democracy and legality.

Having listened extensively to the opinions of the voters before the meeting was convened, the deputies proposed 699 motions on rural economic policies, environmental protection, educating young people, social relief, streamlining government offices and so on. The session's motions examination committee studied these proposals, put forward its views and sent them to the departments concerned which were required to report to the standing committee of the county people's congress on how they had handled these motions. The county people's congress standing committee will superintend this handling and must report it to the next session.

The five-day meeting ended on December 31 last year. The newly elected vice-chairman of the standing committee of the Tongxiang county people's congress Xie Ouxiang addressed the closing ceremony. She expressed the wish that the dep-



The standing committee of the county people's congress and the county people's government.

ties, upon returning to their posts, would mobilize the people of the whole county to concentrate attention on economic construction and political stability and unity.

"We'll enter into the 80s tomorrow," she said. "The 80s are years for us to do our work better in all fields, to build our county into a lovelier land and to make bigger contributions to the modernization programmes of the motherland!"

Basic Political System

The Second Session of the Fifth National People's Congress held last July decided on the establishment of the standing committees of the local people's congresses at the county level and above, changing the local revolutionary committees into local people's governments and restoring the titles of governors and deputy governors of provinces, mayors and deputy mayors and county heads and deputy county heads. The Organic Law of the Local Peo-

ple's Congresses and Local People's Governments of the People's Republic of China adopted at the session has been put into practice since January 1, 1980.

The basic political system in China is a system of people's congresses. The organs through which the people exercise state power are the National People's Congress and the local people's congresses at various levels. The National People's Congress is composed of deputies elected by the people's congresses of the provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the Central Government, and by the People's Liberation Army. It is elected for a term of five years, and holds one session each year. It has powers to amend the Constitution, to make laws, to decide on the choice of the Premier and other members of the State Council, to decide on questions of war and peace and so on. Its permanent organ is its Standing Committee which is composed of the Chairman, the Vice-Chair-

SOCIAL STATUS OF THE DEPUTIES TO THE SEVENTH PEOPLE'S CONGRESS OF TONGXIANG COUNTY

	number	%
Peasants	279	58.5
Workers	78	15.8
Government functionaries	83	16.8
Intellectuals	36	7.3
P.L.A. men	3	0.6
Others	15	3
Total	494	

men, the Secretary-General and other members.

Deputies to the people's congresses of provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the Central Government are elected by people's congresses at the next lower level. People's congresses of provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities are elected for a term of five years.

Deputies to the people's congresses of counties are directly elected by the voters. The people's congresses of counties are elected for a term of three years. People's congresses at provincial and county level hold at least one session each year. These congresses have the power to discuss and decide on the important issues in their respective administrative areas, to elect and recall members of the standing committees of the people's congresses, the presidents of the people's courts and the chief procurators of the people's procuratorates at the corresponding levels, and to decide on the leading members of the people's governments at the corresponding levels. The people's congress at the provincial level has the power to enact and promulgate local statutes.

Why Should There Be Standing Committees of the Local People's Congresses at the County Level and Above? It is for strengthening the people's right to manage state affairs and their supervision over the local governments at various levels. It is also for overcoming the defects resulting from the implementation by the people's government of the functions and powers of a standing organ of a people's congress. Furthermore, it is for giving more scope to the initiative of the localities so as to meet the need for shifting the focus of the nation's work to modernization.

People's governments are the executive organs of people's congresses at the corresponding levels and they are also organs of state administration. The State Council is the Central People's Government and under it are the provincial, city, county and township people's governments. All the leading members of the people's governments are chosen by the people's congresses, and the people's governments are responsible and accountable to the people's congresses at the same levels.

Why the Change of the Revolutionary Committee Into People's Government? It is because the revolutionary committee born at the initial stage of the Cultural Revolution was a "temporary power structure." At that time, it had acted as a tripartite body of the local

Party committee, the local people's congress and the local people's government. Later on, when the Party committees at various levels were re-established, the revolutionary committee was no longer an all-powerful organ. Then, after the downfall of the gang of four, the system of people's congresses was re-installed. The revolutionary committee became the executive organ of the people's congress. Such being the case, a revolutionary committee had no difference in nature and status from a local people's government prior to the Cultural Revolution. As its name suggests, a people's government signifies that people are masters of the country, the change of revolutionary committee into the people's government is only natural.

Interview With Chairman of Electoral Committee

I HAD an interview with Zhu Shiyuan, chairman of the electoral committee in charge of the county's election work, and Zhu Guoqin, a responsible member of the committee office.

Question: What is the composition of the electoral committee?

Zhu Shiyuan: It has 19 members. Three are members of the county revolutionary committee (in 1980 renamed the people's government), the rest are well-known workers, peasants, physicians, teachers and representatives of other professions. According to the electoral law, the electoral committee works under the leadership of the standing committee of the county people's congress. Since there was no standing committee of the county people's congress until this election, the present elec-

toral committee works under the leadership of the county revolutionary committee.

Zhu Guoqin: Comrade Zhu Shiyuan, chairman of the county revolutionary committee, is also the chairman of the electoral committee.



Zhu Shiyuan, former chairman of the Tongxiang revolutionary committee, is elected chairman of the standing committee of the county people's congress.

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Q: What are the principles guiding the division of electoral districts?

Zhu Shiyuan: Since the election of our county is on an experimental basis, leading comrades from the Ministry of Civil Affairs and the Zhejiang Revolutionary Committee (the present people's government) all came here giving guidance to work and summing up experience, which will serve as a reference for other counties in Zhejiang Province and the whole country. There are

This method of division makes it easy to see which form will best facilitate the election work and help the voters to exercise their democratic right to vote.

Q: How do you fix the number of deputies?

Zhu Shiyuan: The number of deputies is fixed according to the electoral law and the actual condition of the county. The electoral law stipulates: The number of deputies to be elected from a people's commune or town to the people's

be an appropriate number of deputies for the various professions. Finally we decided there would be 500 deputies for our county; and this was endorsed by the provincial leadership.

Q: Why do a rural deputy and a town deputy represent different numbers of inhabitants?

Zhu Guoqin: As I understand it, this is because the rural population in China constitutes more than 80 per cent of the total population. In our county over 90 per cent of the population are peasants, while those engaged in industry and commerce mainly live in the towns. If the number of deputies in proportion to the population for the rural areas is the same as that for the towns, then the working class won't be adequately represented in the people's congress. Even though deputies were elected according to that ratio, the results showed that peasant deputies still made up 56.5 per cent of the total in the county.

Q: Will you say something about the fund for election?

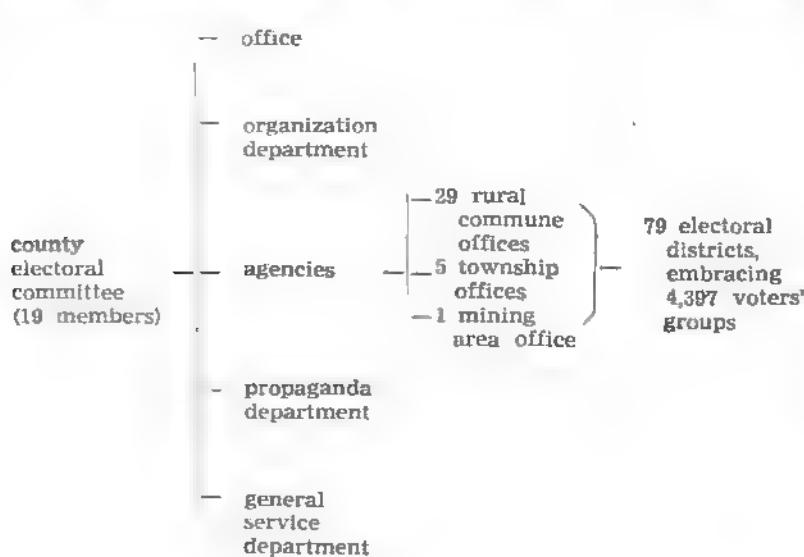
Zhu Guoqin: A large amount of money is needed for the election. Since our country is still poor economically, we have tried our best to practise economy. Even then, we have spent 17,000 yuan.

Q: Where did the money come from?

Zhu Shiyuan: All the expenses were disbursed by the national treasury, as is stipulated by the electoral law. The voters don't have to pay a single fen.

Q: Is a sum of money needed for campaigning expenses?

Zhu Guoqin: No, we don't have campaigning here in China as the case in the capitalist countries. The candidates don't have to pay any money, neither do they need support from any financial group.



several forms in the division of electoral districts which vary in size.

Q: Would you be more specific about these forms, please?

Zhu Guoqin: There are the following categories of electoral districts: formed by a commune or town with a population of around 5,000 to 20,000; by several production brigades with a population of around 5,000 to 8,000 (there are several production brigades in each rural commune); by a production brigade with 1,000 to 3,000 people; by an industrial or mining enterprise, a trade or a neighbourhood committee, with several hundred to 3,000 people.

congress of a county shall be determined by the standing committee of the county people's congress in accordance with the principle that the number of inhabitants represented by each rural deputy shall be four times that represented by each town deputy.

According to the distribution of the rural and town population of our county, we proposed that one rural deputy be chosen from among every 1,600 inhabitants, and one town deputy from among every 400 inhabitants. If the number of deputies is too large, it will be unwieldy and inconvenient for them to discuss and solve problems; but if it is too small, there won't

The election fund is mainly used for the training of personnel for publicizing the electoral law and paying other charges for printed matter such as

forms, posters, voters' cards and so on, as well as subsidies for those who worked temporarily in holding the election.

sounding empty catch-calls as "direct elections of the Paris Commune type." "People's deputies" was only a hollow term. Even when there was an election, the elected, more often than not, were actually appointed.

Voters, Candidates and Election

EARLY last September, the Zhejiang Provincial Revolutionary Committee (renamed the Zhejiang Provincial People's Government this year) decided that deputies to the county people's congress should be directly elected on a trial basis in Tongxiang County. When this was announced it aroused popular intense interest. People waited to see how the new election would work out.

In the first 20 days of September a countywide movement to publicize and study the new electoral law adopted at the Fifth National People's Congress last July was launched. People were unfamiliar with the new electoral law which contains many major revisions to the electoral law promulgated in 1953. For example:

— The new electoral law extends direct elections by voters from the grass-roots organs of power at the people's commune and town level to those at the county level;

— Instead of listing as many candidates as the number of deputies to be elected, there are now more candidates put up than the deputies to be elected;

— Election is now solely by secret ballot, instead of either by a show of hands or secret ballot;

— Candidates to be elected deputies must now win ballots exceeding one half the total number of electorate, and not just a simple majority of ballots cast.

Tongxiang County adopted various methods to publicize widely the new electoral law. It organized amateur agitprop teams to explain the law in the streets and villages; it read and explained the law several times a day over its wired rediffusion network; it called people together in groups to study and discuss the law during work breaks; it used wall and blackboard newspapers to publicize the law everywhere in town and countryside.

From Apathy to Avid Attention

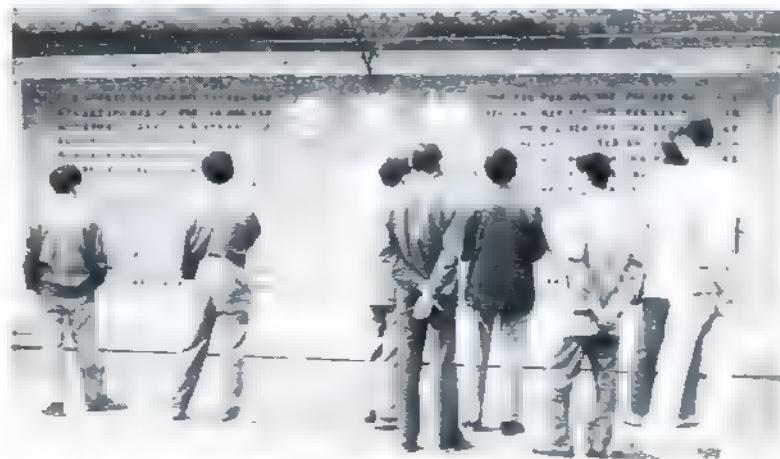
At first a lot of people were apathetic. They thought it was the "same old stuff." They said: "What is an election but a list of candidates put up by the authorities for voters to endorse."

Why were people so indifferent? Largely because in the ten years of turmoil beginning in 1966, no elections were held for people's congresses despite the constant use of such high-

So little wonder there was general public indifference when elections were announced this time. But through publicity and discussions, people gradually came to see that the new electoral law had been worked out to get rid of these very faults. They saw that the state this time was earnestly determined to guarantee the voters genuine democratic rights. Thereupon most voters began to pay real attention to the coming election. A few, however, still took a wait-and-see attitude because they knew from personal experience that what was said or written was not necessarily carried out in practice.

Registration of Voters

Tongxiang County began registration of voters in the latter half of September. It was meticulously done. Red flags flew outside registration centres. People streamed in from all directions to register. Reg-



List of registered voters.

It also stipulates: "Persons deprived of political rights by law shall not have the right to vote and to stand for election." In addition, insane persons are not included in the list of voters.

In Tongxiang County, the number of people deprived of political rights and those whose right to vote has been temporarily suspended totalled 158, or 3.10,000ths of the county's total population.

Voters' certificates.

istration of all 370,000 who could vote in the county was completed in seven days, with only one unwilling to register.

Who has the right to vote?

The electoral law stipulates: "All citizens of the People's Republic of China who have reached the age of 18 shall have the right to vote and to stand for election irrespective of nationality, race, sex, occupation, social origin, religious belief, education, property status or length of residence."

After registration, lists of all eligible voters were published and certificates issued to all voters by the end of September in all the county's 79 electoral districts. At the same time, the county electoral committee asked all voters to examine the lists and tell the committee if they had any objections. But no objections were raised. In some electoral districts, however, some names were left out or wrongly written on the lists. They were corrected after being pointed out by those eligible to vote.

Registration of Voters in Tongxiang County

Total population	579,883
Total number of voters	374,823
Registered voters	374,777
Unregistered voters	46
Insane persons	482
Persons temporarily ineligible to vote	16
Persons deprived of political rights	142

Notes:

1. Of the 46 unregistered, 45 could not be traced and therefore could not be informed. One was unwilling to register.
2. Those temporarily ineligible to vote included those in custody, those in custody but released on bail for medical treatment and offenders awaiting trial or sentencing.
3. Those deprived of political rights included counter-revolutionaries, criminals and a small number of landlords and rich peasants who had not had their designations removed.

Candidates Recommended Through Consultations

In October, the stage of recommending candidates through consultations began. This proved to be the busiest and most lively stage in the whole process of election.

Recommendation From Below.

China's electoral law stipulates: "Candidates standing for direct election by the voters as deputies to people's congress shall be nominated by voters of various electoral districts or various electoral units." "The Communist Party of China, the democratic parties and the people's organizations may nominate candidates for election as deputies either jointly or separately. Any voter or deputy may nominate candidates for election as deputies when such nomination is seconded by three others."

Candidates standing for election as deputies in Tongxiang County this time were nominated basically by voters of various electoral districts or various electoral units. The names of the nominees, regardless of who the nominators were, had first to be put forward in a voters' group accompanied by information about the nominees. The group then sent the names into the electoral district.

Five hundred deputies had to be elected for Tongxiang County, but 6,524 candidates were nominated in the first round, over a dozen times the number of deputies to be elected.

Democratic Consultations. The above figure was obviously too large. The electoral law stipulates that the number of candidates standing for election shall exceed the number of deputies to be elected by 50 to 100 per cent. This called for



Wu Jianqing, a young worker, is elected a deputy to the county people's congress.

repeated discussions and democratic consultations among the voters' groups to reduce the number to between 750 and 1,000.

The electoral districts printed lists of candidates submitted by their respective voters' groups and distributed them to the groups for discussions. So, these groups could select official candidates from those who best represent the interests of the people, who are most competent, are fair and just in handling affairs, and who have made the greatest contributions to socialist construction.

As the number of Party members and cadres nominated in the first round was fairly big, the county electoral committee advised voters to pay attention to the wide representativeness of deputies. It was proper to have a suitable number of candidates representing young people, women, intellectuals, former industrialists and businessmen, returned overseas Chinese and relatives of Chinese overseas. There was no democratic party organization

in the county and only one minority nationality family, so no particular stress was laid in these respects.

Debate. There were lively debates. Some voters of the Chongde Silk Mill insisted on keeping the model worker they had recommended, a woman reeling worker who had worked hard even during the ten years when production was in utter disorder. A number of voters pressed for their nominee, a newly recruited young woman worker, because she had assiduously studied technology and become a skilled machine operator. Such vanguards like her, they held, are needed to bring about the four modernizations.

In the town of Wuzhen, birthplace of China's famous writer Mao Dun, two candidates were strongly supported by different voters. One was a middle school teacher who had taught in Wuzhen for the past 30 years and had former students everywhere. The other was the headmistress of a primary school who had a distinguished record in teaching. But, as the number of candidates in the electoral

district was limited, it would be proper to have one candidate from the field of education. However, repeated consultations failed to resolve this. Both groups insisted that their candidates be retained and let the voters in the electoral district decide. The result was that both candidates were elected.

The list of official candidates was finally decided in the latter half of October after repeated consultations. The names were published and posted up in all the electoral districts and their deeds were publicized in various ways.

How Were the Candidates Made Known to the Public? On the whole, the electoral districts gave equal publicity about each candidate according to the material sent in by their nominators or units concerned. Information concerning the official candidates was printed and distributed, or disseminated on public notice board and over the wired broadcasting network. Their material was read to people before and after work or during the work breaks and so on.

The material concerning the candidates is generally brief and to the point. The Wutong electoral district publicized candidate Wu Jianqing's deeds in this way: "Wu Jianqing, 24, works in a coal-mining machinery plant. His technical innovations enabled him to do 15 months of work in 12 in 1978. In the first half of 1979, he completed a 13-month production quota. He was cited as a young shock worker of the new Long March towards the nation's socialist modernization."

An electoral district of the Nanri People's Commune introduced their woman candidate in this way: "Qiu Xiao-

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bao, 34, production team leader. Since taking up her post in 1974, she has played a leading role in farm work and given competent leadership. Her production team has achieved an all-round development, producing grain, raising silkworms and cattle. Her team has changed from a backward one into an advanced team. She was cited a national "March 8" red-banner pace-setter in September 1979."

Such publicity helps the workers and peasants who make up the majority of the voters to know and remember the various candidates' deeds and to compare and choose which candidates they would vote for.

Even after the official lists of candidates are published, voters still can put forward their objections. This did happen in the Wutong People's Commune. After the list was published, several voters told the electoral district office that two persons on the list should not be allowed to stand for election because, according to them, one had been known to play cards for small stakes, which was a disgraceful thing, and the other was rather dishonest in finan-

Voters On Election

Dai Mingli, an old peasant nearly 70 years old, said: "I spent almost 40 years in the old society, and I had never heard of an election. I didn't have enough to eat, let alone have democratic rights to speak of!"

"In 1953, I took part in the election of people's deputies for the first time, you can't imagine how happy I was. But in the last ten years, there were no more elections. This time the election is held in a very earnest way, and I'm very happy."

Wang Changsheng, a middle-aged peasant, said: "I have no idea how things were in the old days. But I'm clear about what happened in the days when Lin Biao and the gang of four ran rampant. Their followers often searched the people's houses and kidnapped people. Once they compelled us to elect their man to the 'revolutionary committee.' In those days we were always on tenterhooks and production declined. They talked a lot about mass democracy, but these were all empty talk. This time the election is conducted in a down-to-earth manner."

1,000 ballots: Another peasant, Li Songhao, told me of one episode. Once when he was 12 years old, the bao head (a petty official of the Kuomintang government) ordered him to report to the village government to fill out ballots. He was a primary school pupil then. Since all the grown-ups in the village were illiterates, he was considered an "educated man." In one day, he filled out 1,000 ballots with the same name on them. He had not the slightest idea who the man was. Later he learnt the man was a big landlord in the neighbouring village, who bribed the village head and bao head to fill out 1,000 ballots for him in his campaign, to be a deputy to the "national assembly" controlled by the Kuomintang.

No one in the village knew about this. After the boy had filled out the ballots, the village head gave him a bowl of noodles as a reward and warned him that he should keep it a secret. Li Songhao said to me, "So this was the election in the old society!"

cial matters and not a very proper person. These were not criminal actions, but such people should not be allowed to

become people's deputies, they said.

The charges were investigated. It turned out that the first person was being maligned, and the voters were told the findings. The second person did not have a good reputation and his nomination was referred back to the voters' groups. He was replaced by another candidate.

Modestly Stands Down. In discussions, many candidates modestly stood down and recommended others. Dong Fengpei, a Party branch secretary of a production brigade, was recommended as a candidate by a large number of voters in his district because he had done a lot for the peasants over the



Qiu Xiaobao (first, left) at work.

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last 20 years or so. Time and again he modestly declined to accept the nomination. Instead, he recommended a young deputy leader of a production brigade. He explained to the voters that he was old and the heavy responsibility should be put on younger shoulders.

In the electoral district of the financial and trade system in Wuzhen, Party branch secretaries and managers of retail shops modestly stood down, proposing instead that outstanding shop assistants and attendants be nominated as candidates. Liu Fuxing, Party branch secretary of the department in charge of food grain and an advanced worker, was nominated as a candidate. But he recommended a former capitalist named Shen, now a checker, as candidate. He said that Shen, a working man today, still had some standing among former industrialists and businessmen. Shen had done good work. He should be elected so that the local people's congress would have a wider representation. After discussions, the voters agreed with Liu and Shen was nominated and elected.

Did any individual try to get himself elected? Nothing of this sort happened in Tongxiang, be-

cause such a thing would get little support. If any one had tried, people would be turned off, and the person labelled as "overweening," "vain" and so on. (This tradition seems to be changing as the press has reported quite a few instances of workers and peasants seeking nomination in grass-roots elections in other parts of the country.) However, there were plenty of signs showing that some people would have jumped at the chance to become deputies. After all, a deputy to the county people's congress enjoys the respect of others and has a say in the decision-making organ, although he will not leave his job or get any stipend as a deputy.

There were voters who tried to get a candidate from their units elected. This was because they wanted to have some one representing their views directly in the county organ of power. But the rivalry seldom led to antagonism between units. Almost invariably an understanding is reached through full and patient consultations.

98.86 Per Cent Voted

From the end of October to early November, elections were held in the electoral districts. The vote was by secret ballot.

For the sick and disabled voters, election officials with a ballot-box went to collect their ballots. Illiterates in the countryside were allowed to ask others to fill in the ballot for them.

The elections were carried out in a festive atmosphere, with people beating gongs and drums, letting off fire-crackers, and with loud and lively music broadcast over the loudspeakers. Slogans such as "Voters guaranteed full democratic rights!" and "People's deputies elected by the people, work for the people!" were pasted everywhere about the polling booths. Elderly people went to cast their votes on the arm of their grandchildren. People hurried back from official business outside to exercise their rights.

The percentage of voters who turned out to cast their votes was 98.86 per cent in the county's 79 electoral districts.

On November 4, the election results were announced. Meetings were called by the electoral committee to issue certificates to the successful candidates in various electoral districts. Many of the newly elected deputies made speeches, expressing their determination to live up to the voters' expectations.



Voting.



Issuing certificates to those elected deputies.

• Youth Opinion Poll

Most young people want to study more and improve their technical skills in the new decade. This was what a recent poll taken by the Shanghai Shipyard among its young workers showed.

When 166 young men and 116 young women, representing a cross section of young people, were asked "What are your wishes for the 80s?" and asked to write down three wishes without signing their names, this was the result:

- One hundred and seven wanted to do spare-time study to attain a senior middle school or college graduate level;
- One hundred and four wanted to work hard and master skills in their work;
- Nine wanted to do some research and make inventions;
- Seventy-six wanted to tour scenic spots and places of historic interest in the country;

- Fifty-eight wished they would get more pay;

- Forty-three wished to master one or several foreign languages;

- Thirty-one wanted new housing;

- Eighteen wished to find an ideal spouse and start a family;

- Thirteen were determined to stop smoking;

- Thirteen said they would like to read books by world famous authors.

One young man wrote this with his answer: "Who doesn't want a good job, a happy family and a fine life? But the next ten years, a brief moment in history, will be a decade of great change. I think the first wish of a Communist Youth League member should be to raise his or her educational level so as to meet the needs of the developing economy."

Another wrote: "I won't aim very high, nor waste my time sighing over the time lost. I

will go on trying to be as useful as I can to our society. This is my wish."

• Winter Camping In Harbin

The Communist Youth League Committee of Harbin is organizing rich and varied winter camping activities for students over the school holidays. This is the first time such activities have been held in the city.

In the day, students of both sexes play outdoors, riding ice-junks and on sleds hauled by horse and deer on the frozen Songhua River. At night, there are campfire parties and visits to the parks where there are ice-lantern displays. The youngsters cheerfully learn scientific and military knowledge and discuss among themselves what they like and what they hope to do with their lives.

The temperature in Harbin in winter often drops to 20 to 30 degrees C. below zero. Therefore, winter vacation in this part of China is longer.

• At Home on the Changjiang

The people operating the passenger boats plying the Changjiang River, the longest river in China, are praised for their thoughtful service which includes providing sleeping accommodation for passengers prior to departure and on-arrival. This was started last January by the management of the Changjiang Shipping and Navigation Bureau.

The ships plying between Wuhan and Chongqing, Wuhan and Shanghai, Shanghai and Chongqing in the past did not put up passengers for the night before sailing or after



Ice-lantern festival in Harbin.

People in the News



Hua Luogeng at a Party branch meeting for the first time.

Mathematics Society. He was born of a poor family in Jiangsu Province in 1910. After graduating from a junior middle school at 14, he began to study mathematics by himself while working as an apprentice.

In 1935, Hua Luogeng had earned international recognition as a mathematician. After post-graduate studies at Cambridge, he returned to China to become a professor in the National Southwest Associate University. In 1946 he was a researcher in the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton University. In 1950 he declined the offer of a life-long professorship by the University of Illinois and returned home.

Over the last dozen years, he has written *A Quick Method of Seeking the Best Plan*, *A Plain Course on the Overall Planning Method* and many other works, and has done much to apply mathematics to help build up the national economy. He headed a team which visited more than 20 provinces, cities and autonomous regions to popularize the method of seeking the best plan and the overall planning method.

arrival. This had caused travellers much inconvenience as they had to find lodgings on shore.

In addition, there are now film shows on the boats and photographers to take photos of passengers posing before the

lovely scenery on both banks of the river. Meals are served at night for those waiting to change other ships.

• Stamps With Beijing Opera Faces

A set of eight colourful special stamps showing different facial makeups of Beijing opera characters has been issued.

The colourful facial makeups of Beijing opera actors proclaim their temperament and other features. Red is for loyalty and courage, black for frankness, and white for craftiness.

This set of stamps shows heroes from classical traditional operas. The first stamp shows Meng Liang, a warrior of the Song Dynasty (960-1279), who figures in the opera *Hongyang Cave*. The second has Li Kui, a character in the opera *Black Whirlwind* adopted from the classical Chinese novel *Water Margin*. Both stamps have a face value of four fen.

Two other stamps show Monkey King Sun Wukong in the opera *Uproar in Heaven*, the warrior Zhang Fei in the opera *Reed Marsh*. Face value is 20 fen and 70 fen respectively.

All the eight stamps are 30 × 40 mm.



ASTRONOMY

Observation of Total Solar Eclipse

The total solar eclipse on February 16 observed in southwest China's Yunnan Province attracted the interest of more than 200 Chinese scientists from 20 scientific research institutes and universities in Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing and Xian.

This year, the moon's shadow passed over Zaire, Tanzania, the Indian Ocean, India and Burma and entered China from Ruili in Yunnan Province and disappeared in Leishan and Huangping, Guizhou Province.

The Academy of Sciences attached much importance to this year's observation of the total solar eclipse. The academy set up three observatory stations and 17 sub-stations in Yunnan for the scientists to carry out 36 research projects.

Scientists in Ruili first saw the eclipse at 18:32'26", followed by those in Luxi and Kunming. Optical, radio astronomical, ionospheric, radio wave propagational, geomagnetic, atmospheric physical and meteorological means were employed by the observers. Thanks to full and careful preparations beforehand, all instruments functioned smoothly and, despite many unfavourable factors at the time, the results obtained were satisfactory.

Before the solar eclipse happened, scientists explained its cause to people in the minority nationality areas in the path of the moon's shadow. The eclipse fell on the day of the traditional Lunar New Year. Superstitious locals believed that an eclipse on New Year's Day forecast catastrophes.

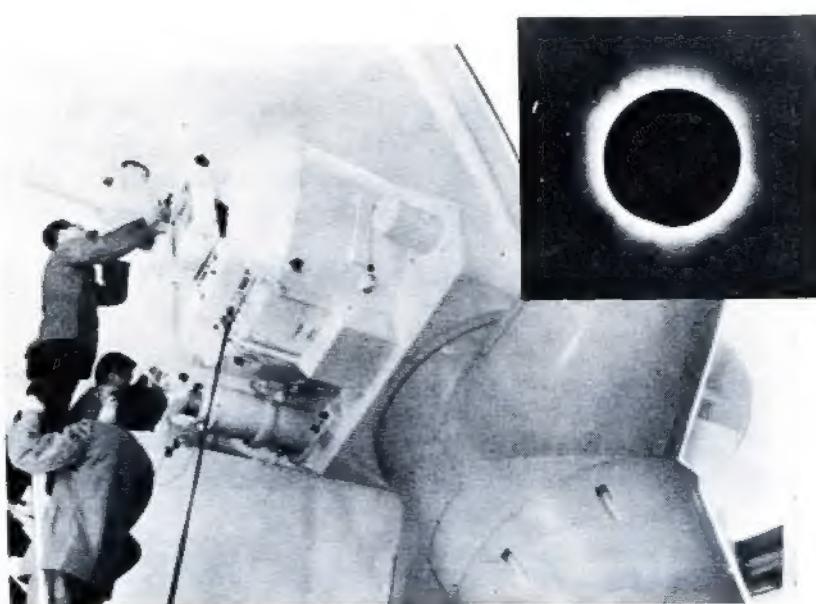
China is one of the earliest countries to observe and record solar eclipses.

The earliest recorded solar eclipse is found in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, attributed to Confucius, 551-479 B.C. It occurred on February 22, 720 B.C. during the reign of Duke Yin of Lu. This is 135 years earlier than the earliest recorded by the Greeks.

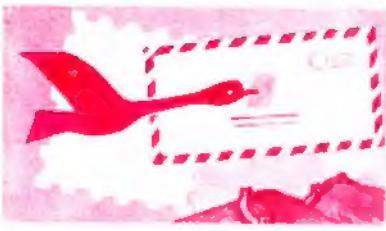
But earlier still are eclipses recorded on oracle bones during the period 1300 B.C.-1100 B.C. and in the Chinese classics *The Book of History* and *The Book of Songs*.

Ancient Chinese held elaborate ceremonies when an eclipse occurred. They beat gongs and sang and danced, awed by the disc of the sun being "nibbled away" by a "heavenly dog." There were sun priests with red scarfs to offer sacrifices. *The Book of History* has a story about two officials, who were so fond of wine and women that they neglected to forecast a solar eclipse and were executed for their dereliction of duty. This shows that ancient Chinese astronomers knew how to forecast solar eclipses before 400 B.C., which is when the incident was supposed to have taken place.

Taiyangli (Solar Calendar), compiled in 104 B.C., mentioned that there was a cycle of 135 lunar months for lunar and solar eclipses with a differential of half a day. The Chinese astronomer Guo Jingzhi in his *Wujili* written in 762 A.D. noted a cycle of solar eclipses which is very close to the cycle discovered by the American astronomer Simon Newcomb in the late 19th century.



Scientists in Yunnan observing total solar eclipse on Feb. 16.



LETTERS FROM READERS

Deng Xiaoping's TV Interview

I think Deng Xiaoping's TV interview with a British delegation, which was published in issue No. 2, merits particular attention. Many important questions were answered, such as socialist democracy, socialist legal system, China's four modernizations and improvement of the Chinese people's welfare.

In addition, I am glad that Deng Xiaoping also spoke about what would become of China a hundred or a thousand years from now. He said that China would never seek hegemony, would for ever keep to the socialist system, would never allow the emergence of a new bourgeoisie and would always belong to the third world.

H.G. Foerster
Bielefeld, W. Germany

Soviet Union's True Features

The sudden news of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan towards the end of last year shook the entire international community. Instead of pulling its troops out of that country, the Soviet Union has sent more crack units to areas bordering on Pakistan and Iran. Though the Far East is far away from the Middle and Near East, the Afghan events constitute a serious international problem. Whether we like it or not, we should not remain indifferent.

In the world maps, areas north of 40° north latitude is called the north frigid zone. Most parts of the Soviet Union are in this zone, and only parts of its Central Asia and Caucasus regions are to the south of the 40th parallel. The Soviet Union's southern neighbours are Afghanistan and Iran.

In the past, Peter the Great formulated the policy of southward thrust, which has been followed by all the tsars. They have

all tried to get to the warm waters and coveted ice-free harbours. What they dream of is the Indian Ocean.

Obviously, what the Soviet Union has been doing is to make Afghanistan its base and then put Iran and Pakistan under its control, thus making its way to the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean.

Over the past 30 years, the Soviet Union has been trying by hook or by crook to catch up with and overtake the United States. Now full-fledged, it can contend with the United States, and has also revealed its true features.

Jinji Kitamura
Takaoka, Japan

I think there is no need to make any more comment on Viet Nam's hegemonism and its relations with the Soviet Union. What is important is to open our eyes to the facts and see through its true features. If we take a good look at Viet Nam which is the Soviet Union's thug, and then at the Soviet Union which has invaded Afghanistan, and see how anxious they are to legalize their crimes through deceptive propaganda, it is not hard to come to this conclusion: They are out-and-out hegemonists.

Yukio Kotani
Hyogo, Japan

Hoang Van Hoan's Article

Veteran revolutionary Hoang Van Hoan's article in issue No. 49 was, I think, of great use and value and very moving. Powerfully marshalling all essential facts, this work tore to threads the lies and distortions that comprise the so-called White Book ("White Terror Book" seems apt) behind which the Vietnamese rulers seek to hide their genocidal policy towards the terribly long suffering Kampuchean people.

Mr. Hoang Van Hoan's article carried such force in providing us with some idea of the vast amounts of aid and support, both material and human, given by the Chinese people. Le Duan and company are making a big mistake in thinking that all the evil they are creating will cause the Vietnamese people to forget the magnificent assistance that they received over many years and under circumstances of great hardship faced by China at the time. It is common knowledge to those who bother to find out that China never dwells for a moment on the aid and sup-

port which she provides to countries and revolutionary movements the world over.

Stephen Payne
Bristol, Britain

Translate Into Nepali

Your articles are very useful to us. We have translated some of the articles on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought into Nepali. . . . We have translated the first part of "Visiting Places of Revolutionary Significance" [Nos. 34, 36, 38 and 39, 1979] and "Lin Biao's Anti-Marxist 30-Word Principle" [No. 5, 1979] into Nepali and published in the latest issue of Kopila. These articles are well received by our readers who can use them to oppose ultra-Left tendencies. Our readers have requested us to translate and publish the remaining 3 parts of "Visiting Places of Revolutionary Significance." We are trying to meet their requests.

Mrigendra Raj Subedi
Bagmati, Nepal

On Democracy

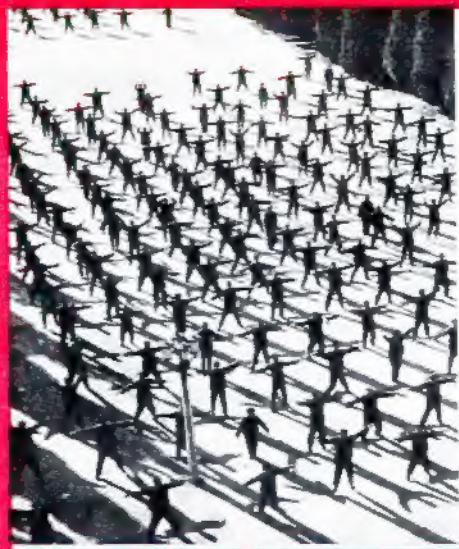
In your column "Letters From Readers" in No. 52 of last year, I read a contribution from A. Djavadi. Hasn't he been long enough in Germany to know that the good things are the results of battle? In my own country, as in Germany, the situation is thus: Working people strike and are abused in newspapers, television, and often enough by their "own" trade unions. But they go on till they get what they wanted! If they had to wait for "democracy" to lend them a helping hand, they would have wages that would leave them starving!

J.M. van der Hoeven
Lopik, the Netherlands

I Like Background Information

I take a deep interest in reading background information concerning your country. Your articles about restructuring the economic system are of great interest to me. Reading *Beijing Review* helps one understand the changes and development in China's socialist construction. Also I know in what way Hua Guofeng has been leading the Chinese people on a new Long March after Chairman Mao died.

Alauddin Ahmed
Rajshahi, Bangladesh



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